



Aruba Marriott Resort in conjunction with StimaAruba reminds the island and visitors to conserve and appreciate the environment with their latest art exposition

In 2005, during the late fall the Marriott Resort introduced a program to introduce island visitors to the cultural aspects of Aruba through a regular series of expositions that showcase local artists. Working with Desiree Croes of the Numismatic Museum, which is the Foundation JMO, plus the members of MANA (Fundacion Movimento di Arte Nobo Aruba) the resort has hosted three exceptional expositions allowing island visitors to appreciate the talents of several local artists. Until now, the themes of the previous expositions have focused on the island culture through celebration of its holidays and traditions. Artistic interpretation of the Dera Gai Festival of San Juan, the end of year Dande performers and Carnival has provided all an insight into the spirit of the Aruban people.

On Wednesday, May 24 the Marriott resort introduced its newest collection on display in the lobby of the original resort, titled "Flora Aruba." As it would suggest the theme is the unique plant life of the island, which has adapted to the often harsh, windy desert conditions. During the opening, Olinda Rasmijn, Director of StimaAruba, a conservation foundation, was presented with a plaque by Desiree Cores and Rick Zeolla, General Manager of the Marriott Resort. for her tireless work in protecting and promoting appreciation for Aruba's indigenous flora and fauna.

The evening was an exciting introduction to Aruban culture on many levels, including innovative performances by master showman Jhon Freddy Montoya and local poet Wilfred Jansen. The real stars of the show were the works by fifteen local artists in a variety of media, and some were quite practical, going beyond being paintings hung on a wall. Most noted was the unique bedspread by Elvis Tromp, dramatically unveiled during Freddy Montoya's performance. Veteran artists and teachers such as Maria Teresa Martinez, the collection's curator and director of MANA, were joined by three artists whose works were new to the art aficionados of Aruba. Frank Croes, the Director of the Instituto di Cultura, Edmond Tuyeehut, Mo Mohamed, Timothy Charles, Belinda de Veer, Adolfo Valbuena, Stan Kuiperi, Laureen Eman, Maria La Torre, Alfonso de Windt and Nancy Hernandez have been seen during a number of expositions both at the Marriott and various galleries around the island. New to the gathering were the works of Cherry Douglas and Vanessa Jansen, both working in acrylics on canvas, and Rosalie Klein, who presented a unique medium, "wearable art" in the form of hand painting with dyes on silk and the only photograph in the exposition, "Tres Kadushi."

Adolfo Valbuena presented an interesting mix of media that incorporates elements of modern technology in his design, and the collage of Mo Mohammad, which used actual pieces of cactus was outstanding in its individuality. All of the striking works representing island floras reflect the face of Aruban nature, and a reminder to conserve and protect the environment. They offer island guests an opportunity to bring a beautiful piece of Aruba home with them, a continual reminder of their stay, and a very unique representation of the individual beauty of the island's nature.

It was revealed on Wednesday evening that subjects of future exhibitions will be Island Fauna, Monuments, and Marine Life. Each exhibition is for one month, so "Local Flora" can be viewed in the Marriott Resort lobby until June 24. A price list can be obtained from the concierge, and purchase of the works arranged through the hotel, which will ship the piece to the buyer's address when the present exhibition is over. As hotel management asserts, the main point of this exhibition is conservation and appreciation for the environment, a theme that will also be illustrated by future exhibitions. It is a cause close to the heart of all the artists and organizers, and they welcomed this opportunity to provide a means for others to appreciate as well. It is definitely worth a pleasant stroll along the beach over to the Marriott.